



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

The Laws of History - 27037

Last update 02-08-2020

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: School of History - Honors Program

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: E. Safra

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof. Yuval Harari

Coordinator Email: ynharari@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: By appointment

Teaching Staff:

Prof Yuvalnoah Harari

Course/Module description:

The course will examine whether history is subject to any fixed laws, and whether there are general rules for historical thinking. Is history a deterministic or a random process? Is history moving towards any predetermined goal? What are the relations between human history and the laws of physics, chemistry and biology? The course will also offer several basic rules for historical thinking, which are relevant to the understanding of all historical processes – from the rise of the Roman Empire to the Second World War.

Course/Module aims:

To introduce students to the way we can think systematically about history, and how to place history within a broader academic and scientific context.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

At the end of the course, students will be able to think more systematically about a wide range of historical processes. In particular, they will be familiar with a number of universal rules that help us understand historical processes in any period or area.

Attendance requirements(%):

100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Frontal lectures combined with questions and discussion.

Course/Module Content:

1. Is history subject to any fixed laws?
2. How historical processes begin.
3. How historical processes end.
4. Historical turning points.
5. The main actors of history.
6. Clashes and mergers in history.
7. Does history have a goal?
8. Does history have any ethical laws?

Required Reading:

Reading assignments will be given to student every week after every lesson.

Additional Reading Material:

Reading assignments will be given to student every week after every lesson.

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 100 %

Presentation 0 %

Participation in Tutorials 0 %

Project work 0 %

Assignments 0 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %

Other 0 %

Additional information:

no.